

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-05 NEA-10 ARA-10 /096 W
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R 090708Z SEP 77

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4927
INFO USMISSION USUN
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MANILA 14263

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, PGOV, ASEAN, UN
SUBJECT: PRE-32ND UNGA CONSULTATIONS

REF: STATE 205678

1. SUMMARY. THE GOP FOUND MOST USEFUL THE USG POSITIONS ON THE VARIOUS UN ISSUES WHICH WE PROVIDED PRIOR TO THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED PRE-UNGA MEETING OF ASEAN OFFICIALS IN SINGAPORE. WHILE GOP OFFICIALS OFFERED US LIMITED SUB-
STANTIVE COMMENT ON THESE ISSUES, THEY DID MAKE A POINT OF ASSERTING THAT THEY ARE PREPARED TO DEFEND THE PHILIPPINE HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD IN NEW YORK. FOREIGN SECRETARY ROMULO WILL AGAIN LEAD THE PHILIPPINE DELEGATION. WE HAVE SOME INDICATIONS, HOWEVER, THAT ROMULO MAY CUT SHORT HIS STAY AT THE UNGA. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBOFFS LUNCHEON WITH DFA ASSISTANT SECRETARY (IO) VERCELES SEPTEMBER 8 TO DISCUSS ISSUES RELATED TO 32ND (AND RESUMED 31ST) UNGA. WE HAD EARLIER PROVIDED
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VERCELES WITH TALKING POINTS EMBODIED IN REFTEL. HE SAID HE FOUND THESE MOST USEFUL AND TIMELY IN CONNECTION WITH HIS ATTENDANCE AT THE JUST CONCLUDED PRE-UNGA MEETING OF ASEAN OFFICIALS IN SINGAPORE. VERCELES DESCRIBED THE SINGAPORE TALKS AS WORTHWHILE, NOTING THAT THE ASEAN COUNTRIES WOULD CONTINUE THEIR CONSULTATIONS IN A LOOSELY STRUCTURED FASHION IN NEW YORK. HE ADDED THAT THERE

WAS A DESIGNATED ASEAN COORDINATOR ON EACH OF THE UN COMMITTEES.

3. (A) HUMAN RIGHTS. VERCELES OFFERED LIMITED COMMENTARY ON THE ISSUES. IN RESPONSE TO EMBOFFS' QUERY AS TO WHAT ITEMS THE GOP MIGHT BE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN THIS YEAR, VERCELES FIRST SAID THAT THERE WAS NOTHING IN PARTICULAR. THEN HE PAUSED, SMILED AND ADDED, "OF COURSE WE WILLBE PREPAED TO DEFEND OUR HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD." HE ADDED THAT HE EXPECTED THAT A NUMBER OF OTHER COUNTRIES WOULD BE MAKING COMMENTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND ON THE U.S. POLICY CONCERNING THIS ISSUE.

(B) WEST BANK SETTLEMENTS. HE ANTICIPATED AN ARAB RESOLUTION CONDEMNING THE CONTINUING ESTABLISHMENT OF ISRAEI SETTLEMENTS ON THE WEST BANK. HE THOUGHT THE ASEAN COUNTRIES WOULD, IN PRINCIPLE, SUPPORT SUCH A RESOLUTION.

(C) EAST TIMOR. VERCELES INDICATED THAT ALL OF THE ASEAN COUNTRIES, EXCEPT PERHAPS SINGAPORE, WOULD SUPPORT INDONESIA ON THIS ISSUE. HE SUGGESTED SOMERESERVATIONS ON SINGAPORE'S PART.

(D) VIETNAM MEMBERSHIP. ASEAN COUNTRIES WILL NOT CO-SPONSOR THE RESOLUTION FOR SRV MEMBERSHIP. ALL WERE CONFIDENTIAL

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PREPARED TO DO SO EXCEPT THAILAND.

(E) THIRD COMMITTEE. VERCELES STATED THAT THE PHILIPPINES IS DROPPING ITS CANDIDACY FOR THE THIRD COMMITTEE CHAIRMANSHIP WHICH THEY HAD HOPED MIGHT BE FILLED BY THEIR AMBASSADOR TO ROMANIA, LETICIA SHAHANI. IT'S THE LATINS' TURN AND THE GOP IS NOW PREPARED TO LET THE CHAIR GO TO JAMAICA.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MANILA 14263

4. PHILIPPINE DELEGATION. THERE SEEMS SOME DISARRAY AT THE MOMENT AS TO THE COMPOSITION AND MOVEMENT OF THE GOP DELEGATION. IN THE ABSENCE OF A PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE (AMBASSADOR REYES HAS DEPARTED NEW YORK AND WILL ASSUME THE AMBASSADORSHIP IN PEKING), AMBASSADOR EDUARDO ROMUALDEZ WILL GO UP FROM WASHINGTON TO COVER THE RESUMED 31ST AND THE BEGINNING OF THE 21ND UNGA, ACCORDING TO VERCELES. VERCELES HAD NO NEW WORD TO OFFER ON THE ANTICIPATED APPOINTMENT OF GOVERNOR BENJAMIN (KOKOY) ROMUALDEZ TO THE PERM REP POSITION OR WHETHER KOKOY WOULD SHORTLY TRAVEL TO NEW YORK. HE, VERCELES, HOPES TO GO TO NEW YORK NEXT WEEK ALTHOUGH THE PRESIDENT HAS NOT YET SIGNED THE NECESSARY ORDERS. AS FOR FOREIGN SECRETARY ROMULO, VERCELES THOUGHT HE WOULD NOT ARRIVE IN NEW YORK UNTIL SEPTEMBER 25, IN TIME TO REST UP AND MAKE HIS SCHEDULED SPEECH BEFORE THE GA ON THE 28TH. VERCELES ADDED THE NOTE THAT, COUNTRARY TO PAST PRACTICE, ROMULO MIGHT REMAIN AT THE UNGA FOR ONLY THREE WEEKS, THEREAFTER RETURNING TO MANILA.

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5. COMMENT. THE SUGGESTED ROMULO SCHEDULE IS OF INTEREST. HIS DELAYED DEPARTURE FOR NEW YORK IS PRESUMABLY TO BE PRESENT HERE FOR THE UPCOMING HOLBROOKE VISIT. THE PROSPECT OF ROMULO'S CUTTING HIS CHERISHED NEW YORK SOJOURN TO THREE WEEKS IS LESS EXPLAINABLE. VERCELES VAGUELY MENTIONED FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS AS A POSSIBLE REASON FOR A SHORTENED ROMULO STAY IN NEW YORK. A RECENT AMERICAN VISITOR WHO SAW MARCOS QUOTED THE PRESIDENT AS SAYING THAT ROMULO MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO SPEND MUCH TIME AT THE UNGA THIS YEAR SINCE HE WOULD HAVE TO COME BACK AND HELP IN THE ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN. WHILE WE HAVE LITTLE OF SUBSTANCE TO GO ON, IT IS JUST CONCEIVABLE THAT THE PRESIDENT IS BEGINNING TO POINT TO ELECTIONS EARLIER

RATHER THAN LATER (ON AUGUST 22 HE ANNOUNCED THAT
LOCAL ELECTIONS WOULD BE HELD NO LATER THAN NEXT YEAR).
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